

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS 11/06/07

Though the recent failure of the bond election does not solve the ongoing problems for public convenience and safety (which includes handicap accessibility and winter weather dangers), records security and storage, employee safety and space, and ongoing related costs for detainees, the vote is what it is; and we honestly and sincerely appreciate the input regarding the project in the recent past.

The question now, though, is where do we go from here? That's a question asked after the first bond election, and the challenge and the problem still exist. Continued input in that regard will be appreciated just as it had been in the past. This situation truly is, as it always has been, a County dilemma, not the Commissioners' idea verses the public's ideas. One possible answer is that a number of people throughout the County have expressed interest in being on a city and/or county committee to further discuss what direction to take. Anyone interested in pursuing that avenue may contact the Commissioners' office.

In other matters, Charity Fechter officially assumed her duties on October 9th as the Planning Director. If these first few weeks are an indication, and we trust they are, everyone will continue to be happy with and appreciative of her professional hard work, and her cheerful outlook. Charity, Marilee Tucker, a Planning Board committee, and the Commissioners are currently finalizing interviews for a Planner II position. All participants in that process hope to have the position filled by early December.

Through late summer and early fall, Judy Melin functioned both as the Madison Valley Manor Administrator in Ennis as well as the Joint Tobacco Root Mountains Care Center and Ruby Valley Hospital Administrator in Sheridan. Since October 1st, John Semingson has taken over in Sheridan. Each has taken to their new duties well and in combination have the added bonus of having worked together in a previous hospital/nursing home setting in the past. Their expertise, delightful demeanors and experienced professionalism are much appreciated.

Should anyone take the opportunity to check the County website, madco@madison.mt.gov, or recall the information enclosed with the tax notices, news from the weed department, finance department, planning department, grant office and emergency management can be cited, so as not to duplicate too much here.

Numerous appreciative comments have been gathered on behalf of the road crews the past few months. Continual changes in weather- from hot, dry, windy, & dusty, to wet, slimy & muddy (sometimes within a week's time)- have made it a challenge for them. Naturally, some frustrations were also mentioned by some residents, but overall YOUR appreciation and patience with the work being done, and especially your comments regarding that, are appreciated.

Four important issues to follow are:

1. brucellosis and possible split state status as a result of infected cattle in the Gardiner area
2. proposals for Wilderness in relation to the Partnership strategy and/or the Forest Plan in the Beaverhead-Deer Lodge National Forest
3. continued growth and its related issues ranging from water quality & quantity, wind energy proposals and possible urban sprawl, which has a gamut of issues in itself
4. NorthWestern Energy's transmission line options through Madison County

Until next time, thanks for your continued support.